



DESERT DEVIL DISPATCH

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**Campbell passes 504th
PIR reins to Donahue.
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U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Leopold Medina, Jr.

Devil 7 Awarded Order of Saint Maurice



Sgt. Maj. Gary Kalinofski talks to soldiers Wednesday.

Story and photo by Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Sgt. Maj. Gary Kalinofski, Task Force Devil sergeant major, was presented with the Order of Saint Maurice medalion for excellence in the infantry field Wednesday.

Kalinofski, the 610th recipient of the Centurion-grade award given by the National Infantry Association (NIA), may well be the very first to be honored with the award in a combat zone.

Col. John Campbell, former Task Force Devil commander, nominated Kalinofski for the award more than a year ago, which was approved May 30, 2002.

Since that time, Campbell said, he has been waiting for the right opportunity to present the award: That time was the day before Campbell formally turned over command of

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Task Force Devil Changes Hands

by Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

For the first time in two years, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, has new leadership after a change of command ceremony here Thursday.

Col. John Campbell passed the formal reins of command to Col. Patrick Donahue at a time when U.S. Army and coalition involvement in Afghanistan phases out of combat operations.

In remarks at the ceremony, Campbell said that now, however, is not the time for the operations tempo to slow down, and Donahue's assumption of command ensures Task Force Devil operations

doesn't miss a beat. In the past, both served together as majors at the 504th PIR.

"It's a distinct honor to return to the Devils," Donahue said at the ceremony. "I've been watching you work the past week and I've been impressed with what I've seen."

Since the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment arrived in January, paratroopers have been involved in several high-profile combat operations, most notably Operations Mongoose, Viper and Resolute Strike.

For more than six months, Task Force Devil has been responsible for the capture and destruction of former Taliban and Al-Qaida weapons caches, and

brought in dozens of suspected Taliban members for questioning.

"When the history of the 504th (here) is written, it won't just be about places like Italy, there will be Khost, Bagram, Kandahar," Campbell said. "To the paratroopers, you represent what the army is all about. While America sits back at home, you're here putting it on the line.

"It has been my honor to serve with you," Campbell said.

Maj. Gen. John Vines, commander of coalition forces in Afghanistan, praised the work done during Campbell's tenure, paying him the highest compliment by saying that one of the lines he wrote

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Desert Devil Dispatch falls under the supervision of Task Force Devil.

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Task Force Devil Command Sgt. Maj:

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82nd Airborne Public Affairs:

Maj. Robert Gilpin

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Sgt. Dan Oddo (right), a medic with the 948th Forward Surgical Team starts an IV while 1st Lt. Dewitt, a physician's assistant for the 527th Engineers, checks an injured Afghan Militia Force soldier's level of consciousness.



948th FST medic Staff Sgt. Ryan Miller talks Spc. Jennifer Berg, also a medic with the 948th FST, through the suturing of an Afghan Militia Force soldier's forehead.

14 AMF Injured, 1 Killed in Crash

Story and photos by Cpl. Keith Kluwe
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Fourteen Afghan Militia Force (AMF) soldiers were injured and one killed June 2 in a head-on motor vehicle collision on Highway 4 between Kandahar City and Spin Boldak.

Both trucks involved in the accident were transporting AMF soldiers, according to Capt. Mohammad Ismal, AMF unit commander, who was also injured in the accident.

The injured were transported to the U.S. Army medical facility at Kandahar Air Field for treatment. The one soldier that was killed in the accident was transported to Kandahar mortuary affairs.

"The mass casualty went very well, as far as mass casualties go," said Capt. Jeff Reibenstein, C Company, 307th Logistical Task Force, commander. "We were here, ready, when they arrived, to do what we were trained to do."

The injured AMF soldiers sustained contusions, fractures, lacerations and other blunt force trauma. The only difficulty with treating so many Afghan patients was the language barrier.

"Civil Affairs provided all the interpreters they had on base," Reibenstein

said, "so we were able to get past the language barrier."

Two AMF soldiers will be medivaced to the Combat Support Hospital at Bagram Air Field, according to Spec. Martin Ortiz, the task force's patient administration and medivac clerk.

One of the patients being flown to Bagram sustained a head and neck injury and a broken arm. The other has a closed head injury. Both are being moved because the treatment of their

injuries requires a higher level of care.

Four other AMF soldiers were admitted to the medical facility here and eight were released.

Litter bearers from outside of the medical unit here were called to support the mass casualty. Combat medics and physician assistants from some of the line units, as well as medics from the National Guard engineering unit, also provided treatment.



U.S. Army medical personnel treat Afghan Militia Force soldiers at the Kandahar Air Field terminal.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Leopold Medina, Jr.

Col. Patrick Donahue, incoming 504th PIR commander, left, Maj. Michael Minor, commander of troops, center, and Col. John Campbell, outgoing 504th PIR commander, perform a pass and review Thursday.

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in the colonel's officer efficiency report was, "I would work for him today."

"He's the most tactically and technically proficient brigade commander I know," Vines said. "The so-called 'Spring Offensive' by the Taliban didn't

happen (this year) because the 'devils in baggy pants' didn't let it happen."

Campbell moves to the Pentagon, where he will serve as the executive officer to the Army G-3.

The 10th Mountain Division will take over operations at Kandahar by summer's end.



U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Keith Kluwe

A crowd gathers around the governor of Kandahar Province Gov. Gul Agha Sherzai while he cuts a symbolic ribbon officially opening the Rawanay School, south of Kandahar city. The school is expected to have 500-800 students when classes resume in two months.

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the task force Thursday.

Kalinofski has been a paratrooper for 25 years, and an 82nd Airborne Division paratrooper for 23 years, Campbell said, making the sergeant major a natural for the award.

"I planned to give it to him during the formal this fall," he said, "but I thought it would be better to present it where he's doing such a great job.

"He is the epitome of an infantryman," Campbell added.

For his part, Kalinofski was stunned when he finally realized Campbell was presenting the award. Following a change of command rehearsal Wednesday evening, the commander had everyone gather around



and hung the medallion around Kalinofski's neck.

"I'm at a loss for words, and you know how often that happens," he joked to the surrounding crowd.

The NIA and U.S. Army Infantry Branch first started the Order of Saint Maurice in 1944 for individuals who "served the Infantry community with distinction" and made significant contributions to the infantry field. There are four levels to the award: Primicerius, Centurion, Legionnaire, Peregrinus and Civis. Kalinofski's Centurian level award is generally handed to mid-grade, battalion and brigade officers and senior level non-commissioned officers.

Saint Maurice is the patron saint of infantrymen, martyred along with his legion in 287 A.D. for refusing to offer pagan sacrifices before battle and refusing to kill innocent civilians in the conduct of duty.

The NIA has only awarded 2,533 medallions since the program's beginning.



U.S. Army photos by Cpl. Keith Kluwe

A paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division fires an RPG-7 rocket propelled grenade under the watchful eye of an infantryman from the Romanian Army's 812th Infantry Battalion during a live fire at Tarnak Farms June 4.

Romanians Open Arsenal to U.S. Soldiers

by Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

What would you do if the Romanian army came up to you and said, 'Do you want the opportunity to fire every weapon in our inventory? For more than 300 soldiers from Task Force Devil who attended, the answer was an enthusiastic "yes," with soldier's firing a variety of Soviet bloc weapons at Tarnak Farms Wednesday.

According to Capt. Constantine Hertanu, a public affairs officer for the 812th Infantry Battalion, the Carpathian Hawks' commander wanted to invite his American friends for familiarity fire training on weapons like the Dragonov-model sniper rifle, AK-47, AK-40 (grenade launcher similar to the M-203), rocket-propelled grenade launcher (RPG) and 12.7mm anti-tank machine gun.

Despite the heat — which spiraled to more than 110 degrees by 10 a.m. — hundreds of soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and support units were transported by Romanian 2.5-ton trucks to the live-fire range at Tarnak Farms, a former Al-Qaida training camp located

10 minutes outside of Kandahar Air Field. Now, instead of terrorists training on Soviet weaponry, it was American soldiers getting a feel for weapons that are similar, yet very different, to their own.

Normally, spending two hours or more on the desert plain for 15 minutes of fun (think of waiting in line for an amuse-

ment park ride in Death Valley, Calif.) wouldn't get many takers, but everyone at Tarnak Farms braved the heat for the chance to fire a weapon.

"It was a lot of fun, it really builds camaraderie with the Romanians," said Pfc. David Weir, an engineer with A

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An 82nd AD paratrooper is coached while firing a Romanian copy of the famous Russian Dragonov sniper rifle by an infantryman from the Romanian Army's 812th Infantry Battalion .



ABOVE: A paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division fires a Romanian 9mm pistol during a U.S./Romanian joint live fire at Tarnak Farms June 4. INSET: A Romanian infantryman explains how to fire the 12.7 mm main gun on a Romanian armored personnel carrier to Lt. Col. Richard Williams, the Kandahar Air Field manager.

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Company, 307th Logistics Task Force.

To expedite the training and firing process, the Romanians broke soldiers into groups of six, with each group visiting one weapons station at a time. After a quick safety brief, soldiers were allowed to “light up” the range, shooting at silhouette targets or the skeletal remains of Taliban tanks.

“This really gives you a greater appreciation for the Romanian army, munitions and their professionalism,” said Maj. Mark Cook, a Ranger-trained civil engineer with A Company, 307th LTF. “I hope they do it again, it’s very good experience for U.S. soldiers, in case you’re out of ammo and there’s an AK-47 lying next to you.”

The U.S. and Romanian armies are coalition partners throughout the world, serving together here, in Iraq, Kosovo and Bosnia, said one Romanian troop. It makes sense, he said, to be partners and work closely.

According to Cook, the Romanian’s are doing a good job working together.

“They set a good example of being a good coalition partner,” he said.

Air Force Memorial

Airmen of the 451st Air Expeditionary Group at Kandahar Air Field held a remembrance ceremony May 31 to honor the 37 Americans that were killed in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

American soldiers, airmen and infantrymen from the Romanian 812th Infantry Battalion attended, each wearing a “buddy poppy” on their uniform.

Eight American flags were flown for each of the eight airmen that were killed in the line of duty this year. The families of those killed will each be presented with one of the flags.

Airmen placed 37 “buddy poppies” on a plaque commemorating the dead as each of the 37 service members’ names were read.

The ceremony concluded with 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Commander Col. James A. Whitmore speaking and the playing of taps.



U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Keith Kluwe